

Pearson signs for Millwall

IAN PEARSON, top goalscorer with Wycombe Wanderers last season, has signed professional forms with Second Division Millwall. He signed on Wednesday for an undisclosed fee.

This news has been expected for some time after Pearson's successful trial at the Den, when he scored two goals in the four games he played for the club. He will play full time after finishing his job as a schoolteacher in Ewell, Surrey, in December.

Ian, whose brilliant goalscoring for Wycombe attracted scouts from several league clubs last season, started training with Millwall soon after returning from Wanderers' tour in June. He was selected for the first team in friendlies against other league clubs and scored against Leyton Orient and Portsmouth.

Pearson obviously found the going tougher in the friendlies against Ipswich and Derby County, especially Ipswich, who hammered six goals past

Millwall to win 6-1 at the Den. Nevertheless, he has impressed manager Gordon Jago sufficiently for him to offer terms.

So Ian is back in the professional game which he left a year ago to concentrate on teaching. He spent two years with Plymouth Argyle having played for Goole Town in the Northern Premier League previously.

At Plymouth, the brilliant partnership of Paul Mariner, now an England player, and Bill Rafferty kept him out of the first team for much of his time, although he did play over a dozen games in the senior XI. In the reserves he was top goalscorer both years.

FAVOURITE

Ian came to Wycombe on the recommendation of former Wanderer Keith Blunt, then

assistant manager to Tony Waiters at Plymouth and now manager of Sutton United. Blues boss Ted Powell signed him on contract and from the start, Pearson's skills soon stamped him as a Loakes Park favourite.

He scored a hat-trick on his Isthmian League debut and finished the season with another against Dulwich Hamlet. In between time he hit a staggering 42 goals to bring his tally to 48 for the season — 26 of them coming in league games.

He becomes the latest in a long line of Wycombe players to turn professional. In the First Division both Ken Swain and Viv Busby are ex-Blues while others include Peter Suddaby (Blackpool), Mick Mellows (Portsmouth) and Steve Perrin (Crystal Palace).

Although Wycombe lose a highly gifted forward, they have the satisfaction of making a good deal of money from the sale, some of which would be well spent on strengthening the current forward line which has struggled in pre-season matches so far.



IAN PEARSON
... to Millwall